

# STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

## PUBLIC MEMBER NEWSLETTER

2026

### What is the State Ethics Commission?

The South Carolina State Ethics Commission is the state agency charged with enforcing the Ethics, Government Accountability and Campaign Reform Act of 1991.

The goal of the Ethics Reform Act is to make public servants more accountable to the citizens they serve in order to restore public trust in government institutions and the political and governmental processes.

### Why Are You Receiving This Brochure?

You are receiving this brochure because you are a public member, as defined by the Ethics Reform Act, and are subject to the Ethics Reform Act.

This brochure includes some of the Act's highlights, but in no way encompasses all of the Act's requirements or prohibitions.

In addition to reading this brochure, we encourage you to read the Act in its entirety.

### When In Doubt...

If you have any questions about the Act – don't hesitate to contact us. As a public member, you may request an informal opinion about any issue within our jurisdiction as it relates to your own conduct. For an informal opinion, email Courtney Laster at [claster@ethics.sc.gov](mailto:claster@ethics.sc.gov).

### Statements of Economic Interests

Certain public members are required to file a Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) form upon assuming their official responsibilities and then by March 30<sup>th</sup> of every year that they serve in these roles. Required filers include, but are not limited to: a public member who serves on a state board, commission, or council.

Please contact your governmental entity and/or the Commission if you have a question about whether you should file a Statement of Economic Interests.



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### Your Time Versus the People's Time

Over the course of your public service, you may not: use government equipment, personnel, materials, or time to work on a second business; receive anything of value given in an attempt to influence your actions, or receive money from any person for advice or assistance given as a part of your official duties.

### All In The Family

Nepotism (favoritism based on kinship) is strictly forbidden by the Act. Over the course of your public service, you may not: cause the employment, appointment, promotion or transfer of a family member to a position you supervise or manage; or participate in the discipline of a family member. Family members include: spouses, parents, brothers, sisters, children, *in-laws*, grandparents, or grandchildren.

### Getting Political

You may not use government time, equipment, resources, or property to influence the outcome of an election. Do not print campaign materials, make campaign calls, or send campaign related emails using any government issued equipment.

### Leaving the Public Sector

We hate to see you go, but under certain circumstances your future employment may have restrictions:

- 1) If you were directly involved in procurement, you may not accept a new job in which your new employer is contracting with your former governmental entity if you participated in the procurement process and the contract would fall under your official duties while you were a public member.
- 2) You may not serve as a lobbyist or represent clients on a matter in which you directly or substantially participated for a period of one year.
- 3) You may not accept employment if the employment is from a person/entity regulated by your former governmental entity and involves a matter in which you directly and substantially participated for a period of one year.

### As A Public Member, Never...

- 1) Solicit or receive money in addition to that received in your official capacity for advice or assistance given during your public employment.
- 2) Use confidential information obtained over the course of your service to obtain an economic benefit for you, a family member or a business/individual with whom you are associated.
- 3) Solicit or receive anything of value to influence your decision making in the discharge of your duties or responsibilities.